

Having described the invention, the following is claimed:

1. A method of helping to secure an infant in a  
5 child's car seat and to prevent slouching of the infant  
in the car seat, the car seat comprising a seat surface  
and a back surface extending between two side walls,  
the method comprising the steps of:

placing a cushion having a unitary tube  
10 shaped structure into the car seat, said tube-shaped  
structure having an upside down U-shape including two  
legs with two axial ends and a base portion where said  
two legs are joined together, said base portion being  
located at the top of the back surface of the car seat  
15 and the two axial ends of said legs being located at a  
free edge of the seat surface of the car seat, said  
cushion legs engaging the side walls of the car seat,  
and

placing the infant into the car seat so that  
20 the infant is surrounded by and engages said cushion  
base portion and legs to reduce the surface area of the  
car seat for the infant to occupy in order to help  
minimizing slouching of the infant in the car seat.

2. The method according to claim 1 further comprising the step of:

preceding the step of placing the infant in the car seat, placing another one of said cushions adjacent said cushion on the seat surface and back surface of the car seat to further reduce the surface area on the car seat for the infant to occupy.

3. The method according to claim 1, including the step of:

preceding the step of placing said cushion into the car seat, bending said cushion into an upside down U-shape at a location which is at approximately half of a total length of said cushion.

4. The method according to claim 1, including the step of:

after placing said cushion into the car seat, pushing said legs of said cushion into a recess formed at an intersection of the seat surface and the back surface of the car seat along the two side walls.

5. A cushion for helping to secure an infant in a child's car seat and to prevent slouching of the

infant in the car seat, the car seat comprising a seat surface and a back surface extending between two side walls, said cushion comprising:

5 a unitary preformed U-shaped structure having a base portion and two legs extending equidistant from said base portion, said two legs having axial ends, each of said two legs having an pre-formed elbow shaped bend, and

10 when placed into the car seat, said base portion of said cushion being located at a top of the back surface and said axial ends of said legs being located at a free edge of the seat surface,

15 said cushion reducing the surface area for an infant to be placed in the car seat to occupy in order to help secure the infant in the car seat and to minimize slouching of the infant in the car seat.

20 6. The cushion according to claim 5 wherein said pre-formed elbow shaped bend is located at an intersection of the seat surface and the back surface along the two side walls of the car seat.

7. The cushion according to claim 5 wherein said elbow shaped bend has an angle of between 90-135°.

8. The cushion according to claim 7 wherein said elbow shaped bend has an angle of between 105°.

5 9. The cushion according to claim 5 wherein said cushion is a flexible structure made of French terry cloth material filled with a substance chosen from the group consisting of batting, foam, gel, water and air.

10 10. The cushion according to claim 5 wherein said cushion is washable.

11. The cushion according to claim 5 wherein each leg of said cushion includes a portion which is reduced in thickness relative to the thickness of the remainder  
15 of said cushion, said reduced thickness portions being located relative to a child adapted to be positioned adjacent said cushion and along a distance approximately between the child's temples and chin.

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12. A cushion for helping to secure an infant in a child's car seat and to prevent slouching of the infant in the car seat, the car seat comprising a seat

surface and a back surface extending between two side walls, said cushion comprising:

a unitary preformed U-shaped structure having a base portion and two legs extending equidistant from

5 said base portion, said two legs having axial ends,

when placed into the car seat, said base portion of said cushion being located at a top of the back surface and said axial ends of said legs being located at a free edge of the seat surface, and

10 one or both of said axial ends containing an audible sound producing device,

said cushion reducing the surface area for an infant to be placed in the car seat to occupy in order to help secure the infant in the car seat and to  
15 minimize slouching of the infant in the car seat..

13. The cushion according to claim 12 wherein said audible sound producing device is one of a music box, a rattle and jingle bells.

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14. The cushion according to claim 13 wherein said music box is removable.

15. The cushion according to claim 13 wherein the music box is self-activating in response to an impact force exceeding a predetermined impact force threshold.

5           16. The cushion according to claim 13 wherein said music box is activated by depressing a button sewn onto an outside surface of said leg.

10           17. The cushion according to claim 12 wherein said cushion is a resilient structure made of a textile material selected from the group comprising cotton, polyester, wool, fleece and cotton/polyester blend filled with a substance chosen from the group consisting of batting, foam, gel, water and air.

15           18. The cushion according to claim 12 wherein said cushion is made of a cushioning media selected from the group consisting of a flame retardant foam rubber and foam vinyl covered with a suitable washable skin selected from the group consisting of a  
20           hypoallergenic plastic, nylon and polyurethane.

19. The cushion according to claim 12 wherein said cushion is made of memory foam covered with French terry cloth material.

5           20. The cushion according to claim 13 wherein said music box is activated by a remote control device.

21. A method of helping to secure an infant in a child's car seat and to prevent slouching of the infant  
10 in the car seat, the car seat comprising a seat surface and a back surface extending between two side walls, the method comprising the steps of:

placing the infant into the car seat, and  
placing a cushion having a unitary tube

15           shaped structure into the car seat, said tube-shaped structure having an upside down U-shape including two legs with two axial ends and a base portion where said two legs are joined together, said base portion being located at the top of the back  
20 surface of the car seat and the two axial ends of said legs being located at a free edge of the seat surface of the car seat, said cushion legs engaging the side walls of the car seat,

the infant being surrounded by and engaging said cushion base portion and legs to reduce the surface area of the car seat for the infant to occupy in order to help minimizing slouching of the infant in the car seat.

22. A cushion for helping to secure an infant in a child's car seat and to prevent slouching of the infant in the car seat, the car seat comprising a seat surface and a back surface extending between two side walls, said cushion comprising:

a unitary preformed U-shaped structure having a base portion and two legs extending equidistant from said base portion, said two legs having axial ends,

when placed into the car seat, said base portion of said cushion being located at a top of the back surface and said axial ends of said legs being located at a free edge of the seat surface, and

at least a portion of a stuffed animal being attached to one or both of said axial ends,

said cushion reducing the surface area for an infant to be placed in the car seat to occupy in order to help secure the infant in the car seat and to minimize slouching of the infant in the car seat.



23. The cushion according to claim 22 wherein at least a portion of the stuffed animal is attached to the axial ends of the cushion by a fastener selected from the group comprising a button, a snap connection, and VELCRO™.

24. A method of helping to secure an infant in a child's car seat and to prevent slouching of the infant in the car seat, the car seat comprising a seat surface and a back surface extending between two side walls, the method comprising the steps of:

placing the infant into the car seat, and

placing a first cushion having a unitary tube shaped structure into the car seat, said tube-shaped structure having an upside down U-shape including two legs with two axial ends and a base portion where said two legs are joined together, said base portion being located at the top of the back surface of the car seat and the two axial ends of said legs being located at a free edge of the seat surface of the car seat, said cushion legs engaging the side walls of the car seat,

placing a second cushion having a unitary tube shaped structure into the car seat next to the first

cushion, said tube-shaped structure of the second cushion having an upside down U-shape including two legs with two axial ends and a base portion located next to the base portion of the first cushion and the two axial ends of the legs of the second cushion being  
5 located next to the legs of the first cushion spaced from the free edge of the seat surface of the car seat, the infant being surrounded by and engaging said second cushion base portion and legs to reduce the  
10 surface area of the car seat for the infant to occupy in order to help minimizing slouching of the infant in the car seat.

25. A method of helping to secure an infant in a child's car seat and to prevent slouching of the infant  
15 in the car seat, the car seat comprising a seat surface and a back surface extending between two side walls, the method comprising the steps of:

placing the infant into the car seat, and  
20 placing a first cushion having a unitary tube shaped structure into the car seat, said tube-shaped structure having an upside down U-shape including two legs with two axial ends and a base portion where said two legs are joined together, said base portion being

located at the top of the back surface of the car seat and the two axial ends of said legs being located at a free edge of the seat surface of the car seat, said cushion legs engaging the side walls of the car seat,

5           placing a second cushion having a unitary tube shaped structure into the car seat next to the first cushion, wherein the tube-shaped structure of the second cushion has an upside down U-shape including two legs with two axial ends and a base portion located  
10           next to the base portion of the first cushion and the two axial ends of the legs of the second cushion being located next to the legs of the first cushion spaced from the free edge of the seat surface of the car seat,

          placing a third cushion having a unitary tube  
15           shaped structure into the car seat next to the second cushion, wherein the tube-shaped structure of the third cushion has an upside down U-shape including two legs with two axial ends and base portion located next to the base portion of the second cushion and the two  
20           axial ends of the legs of the third cushion being located next to the legs of the first cushion and not next to the legs of the second cushion,

          the infant being surrounded by and engaging the third cushion base portion and legs to reduce the

surface area of the car seat for the infant to occupy in order to help minimizing slouching of the infant in the car seat.

5           26. The method according to claim 25 wherein the second cushion has a length which is shorter than the first cushion.

10           27. The method according to claim 25 wherein the third cushion has a length which is longer than the second cushion but is shorter than the first cushion.

          28. The method according to claim 25, including the step of:

15           preceding the step of placing the first cushion into the car seat, bending the first cushion into an upside down U-shape at a location which is at approximately half of a total length of the first cushion.

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          29. The method according to claim 25, including the step of:

          preceding the step of placing the second cushion into the car seat, bending the second cushion

into an upside down U-shape at a location which is at approximately half of a total length of the second cushion.

5           30. The method according to claim 25, including the step of:

                  preceding the step of placing the third cushion into the car seat, bending the third cushion into an upside down U-shape at a location which is at  
10           approximately half of a total length of the third cushion.

                  31. The method according to claim 25 wherein one the first, second and third cushions are manufactured  
15           preformed into the U-shaped tube structure.

                  32. The method according to claim 25 wherein the first, second and third cushions are each resilient structures made of a textile material selected from the  
20           group comprising cotton, polyester, wool, fleece and cotton/polyester blend filled with a substance chosen from the group consisting of batting, foam, gel, water and air.

33. The method according to claim 25 wherein the first, second and third cushions are each made of a cushioning media selected from the group consisting of a flame retardant foam rubber and foam vinyl covered  
5 with a suitable washable skin selected from the group consisting of a hypoallergenic plastic, nylon and polyurethane.

34. A cushion for helping to secure an infant in  
10 a child's car seat and to prevent slouching of the infant in the car seat, the car seat comprising a seat surface and a back surface extending between two side walls, said cushion comprising:

a unitary preformed U-shaped structure having  
15 a base portion and two legs extending equidistant from said base portion, said two legs having axial ends,

each of said two legs having a portion which is reduced in thickness relative to the thickness of the remainder of said cushion, said reduced thickness  
20 portions being located relative to a child adapted to be positioned adjacent said cushion and along a distance approximately between the child's temples and chin, and

when placed into the car seat, said base portion of said cushion being located at a top of the back surface and said axial ends of said legs being located at a free edge of the seat surface,

- 5           said cushion reducing the surface area for an infant to be placed in the car seat to occupy in order to help secure the infant in the car seat and to minimize slouching of the infant in the car seat.